

## Message Text

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61

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 W

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R 240534Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8585

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 14150

FOLLOWING TEL SENT NEW DELHI INFO BOMBAY MADRAS  
FROM CALCUTTA DTD 23 SEPTEMBER 1976 RPTD TO YOU

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CALCUTTA 2373

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT

SUBJ: CHIEF MINISTER RAY

1. IT APPEARS THAT CHIEF MINISTER RAY WAS THE OBJECT OF SOME FAIRLY HARSH CRITICISM DURING THE TWO DAY CONCLAVE OF THE WEST BENGAL CONGRESS IN CALCUTTA SEPTEMBER 20 AND 21, THOUGH HE WAS NOT THERE TO HEAR IT ALL (RAY CAME LATE AND LEFT EARLY). WE ARE TOLD THAT RAY WAS ACCUSED OF PROMOTING FACTIONALISM IN THE PARTY (AS A MEANS OF KEEPING A STRONG POSITION FOR HIMSELF AS ARBITER BETWEEN THE FACTIONS) AND THAT SEVERAL SPEAKERS COMPLAINED THAT THE STATE GOVERNMENT WAS ACTUALLY BEING RUN BY THE

POLICE UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE CHIEF MINISTER AND THAT THE OTHER MINISTERS WERE VIRTUALLY POWERLESS AND THE PARTY WAS HELD AT ARM'S LENGTH. THERE WAS ALSO DISCUSSION DURING WHICH IT WAS REVEALED THAT THE CHHATRA PARISHAD AND YOUTH CONGRESS HAD SUFFERED A DROP IN MEMBERSHIP, AND THIS WAS ATTRIBUTED TO THE STATE GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO ASSOCIATE THESE ORGANIZATIONS WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF VARIOUS SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAMS.

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2. WHAT WE HEAR MOST FREQUENTLY NOW IS THAT HAVING FAILED  
IN THEIR EFFORTS TO THROW RAY OUT THE CENTER AND RAY'S  
LOCAL OPPONENVNS HAVE TURNED TO THE TACTIC OF TRYING TO  
WEAR HIM DOWN, TO EMBARRASS AND FRUSTRATE HIM TO THE  
POINT THAT HE WILL BEFORE TOO LONG WANT OUT AND WILL  
RESIGN. SNIPING AT RAY IN PAPERS OUTSIDE OF CALCUTTA -  
AND INDIRECTLY IN SOME CALCUTTA PAPERS - APPEARS TO BE  
A ELEMENT OF THIS TACTIC. IT WILL PROBABLY WORK; NO ONE  
WE HAVE TALKED TO IN RECENT DAYS GIVES RAY MORE THAN  
ANOTHER MONTH OR TWO IN OFFICE. THE QUESTION IS WHETHER  
THE CENTER WILL BE ABLE TO ENGINEER HIS DEPARTURE -  
EITHER THROUGH RESIGNATION OR FIRING - IN SUCH A WAY  
AS TO AVOID HIS SEEMING A VICTIM OF DELHI'S MEDDLING  
IN BENGALI AFFAIRS AND A MARTYR WHO WENT DOWN FIGHTING  
FOR BENGAL INTERESTS. KORN  
UNQUOTE  
SAXBE

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